

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

LISTING OF CLAIMS

1 – 60. (Cancelled)

61. (Currently Amended) A column protector device for protection of an upright column of a racking system, said upright column of a type being channel shaped in cross section and having a substantially rectangular front portion consisting of a front member, first and second outer side members, and—first and second inner side members, first and second connecting members connecting the first and second outer side members to the first and second inner side members, respectively, a first outer lip member extending outwardly from an outer edge of the first inner side member and extending in a plane substantially parallel to the front member, and a second outer lip member extending outwardly from an outer edge of the second inner side member and extending in a plane substantially parallel to the front member, said column protector device is arranged to clip onto said upright column in order to grasp said upright column;

said protector device comprising:

a rigid substantially cylindrical outer shell of a substantially “C” shaped cross section; and

an inner liner shaped to fit within said outer shell;

wherein said outer shell is configured to fit around said upright column such that the outer shell retains to said column in a self attaching manner without the need for any additional fixings, and

said outer shell surrounds the front ~~member, member and~~ the first and second outer side members, and the first and second connecting members, such that the outer shell is coupled to and received by the first and second inner side members of the upright column~~partially surrounds the first and second side members,~~ thereby protecting the front member, the first and second outer side members, the first and second connecting members and parts of the first and second inner side members, and

wherein in use said inner liner is retained between said outer shell and said column and

in which the inner liner comprises a solid substantially part cylindrical member having a substantially part cylindrical outer surface, and a substantially "U" shaped channel formed on an opposite side of said liner to said substantially part cylindrical outer surface and in which, in use, said channel provides a flush interface between an inner profile of said inner liner and an external profile of said upright column in order for the liner to encapsulate the front face and portions of the first and second inner side member of said upright column.

62. (Currently Amended) The column protector device as claimed in claim 61, wherein ~~each of said first and second side members comprises an outer side member and an inner side member; and~~

~~the outer shell, when fitted to the column surrounds said front member, and said first and second outer side members, thereby protecting them; and~~

the outer shell partially surrounds the first and second inner side members so that exposed upright edges of the outer shell lay adjacent to the sides of the column at a position where the column is relatively narrower.

63. (Previously Presented) The column protector device as claimed in claim 61, wherein in use, the column resides partially within a channel formed by the outer shell.

64. (Previously Presented) The column protector device as claimed in claim 61, wherein said outer shell comprises an elongate member having a substantially "C" shaped cross section.

65. (Currently Amended) The column protector device as claimed in claim 61, wherein said outer shell comprises a tubular ~~part~~ substantially cylindrical member having a pair of substantially parallel opposing edges forming either side of a gap in said ~~part~~ cylindrical member; and

~~said part~~ said substantially cylindrical member extends over an angle in the range 260° to 280°, about a longitudinal center line of said outer shell.

66. (Previously Presented) The column protector device as claimed in claim 61, wherein said outer shell has a height in the range 30cm to 120cm.

67. (Previously Presented) The column protector device as claimed in claim 61, wherein said outer shell has an external diameter in the range 10cm to 14 cm.

68. (Previously Presented) The column protector device as claimed in claim 61, wherein said outer shell has a wall thickness in the range 7mm to 9mm.

69. (Previously Presented) The column protector device as claimed in claim 61, wherein said outer shell comprises a pair of opposing longitudinal edges, and has a distance between said opposing longitudinal edges in the range 5cm to 11cm.

70. (Previously Presented) The column protector device as claimed in claim 61, wherein said outer shell comprises a chamfered edge positioned at an end of said shell, between an upper face of said outer shell and an inner surface of said shell, to facilitate sliding of the inner liner with respect to the outer shell.

71. (Previously Presented) The column protector device as claimed in claim 61, wherein said outer shell comprises at least one material selected from the set: a resilient elastomeric polymer based material; Polyethylene; high density Polyethylene; Polypropylene; Polycarbonate; Polyvinylchloride; Polystyrene; Plastic; or a mixture of plastics.

72. (Cancelled)

73. (Cancelled)

74. (Previously Presented) The column protector device as claimed in claim 61, wherein a maximum distance of an outer surface of the substantially "U" shaped channel to the outer part cylindrical surface is in the range 2cm to 5cm.

75. (Previously Presented) The column protector device as claimed in claim 61, wherein said inner liner comprises a material selected from the set: an elastomeric material which is relatively less dense than a material of said outer shell: Polyethylene; Polypropylene; Polycarbonate; Polyvinylchloride; Polystyrene; natural rubber foam; synthetic rubber foam; a compressive composite material; a closed cell SBR foam material.

76. (Previously Presented) The column protector device as claimed in claim 61, wherein said inner liner has a height in the range 30cm to 120cm.

77. (Previously Presented) The column protector device as claimed in claim 61, wherein said inner liner has an external diameter in the range 10cm to 14 cm.

78. (Previously Presented) The column protector as claimed in claim 61, wherein the substantially "U" shaped channel of said inner liner has a width in the range 7cm to 12cm.

79. (Previously Presented) The column protector as claimed in claim 61, wherein the substantially "U" shaped channel of said inner liner has a depth in the range 2cm to 4cm.

80. (Previously Presented) The column protector device as claimed in claim 61, wherein said inner liner is configured such that, after receiving an impact, the inner liner promotes the repositioning of the whole device to a position similar to a position of the device before the impact occurred.

81. (Currently Amended) The column protector device as claimed in claim 61, in which said outer shell, when fitted to said upright column, surrounds the front member, and partially surrounds said first and second inner_side members thereby protecting the front member and parts of the inner_side members from direct impact and partially surrounds each of the first and second inner_side members, said outer shell also surrounding said inner liner, which resides, in use between a substantially part cylindrical inner surface of the outer shell, and an outer face of the front member, an outer face of the first outer_side member and an outer face of the second outer_side member.

82. (Previously Presented) The column protector device as claimed in claim 61, in which said inner liner and said outer shell are slideable with respect to each other in a direction along a main central axis of said outer shell.

83. (Previously Presented) The column protector device as claimed in claim 61, in which said inner liner is bonded to an inner surface of the outer shell, such that the inner liner is fixed relative to the outer shell and cannot slide relative to the outer shell.

84. (Cancelled)

85. (Cancelled)

86. (Previously Presented) The column protector device as claimed in claim 61, wherein said device has greater ductility, impact resilience and persistence of shape than that of the metal rack component it is attached to.

87. (Previously Presented) The column protector device as claimed in claim 61, configured for attaching to said upright column, without the need for an integrated or independent fastening or securing mechanism or mechanisms, and without the need for a bonding agent.

88. (Cancelled)

89. (New) A racking system comprising:

an upright column being channel shaped in cross section and having a substantially rectangular front portion consisting of a front member, first and second outer side members, first and second inner side members, first and second connecting members connecting first and second outer side members to first and second inner side members, respectively, a first outer lip member extending outwardly from an outer edge of the first inner side member and extending in a plane substantially parallel to the front member, and a second outer lip member extending outwardly from an outer edge of the second inner side member and extending in a plane substantially parallel to the front member, the column protector device is arranged to clip onto the upright column in order to grasp the upright column;

a protector device for protecting the upright column including:

a rigid substantially cylindrical outer shell of a substantially "C" shaped cross section; and

an inner liner shaped to fit within the outer shell;

wherein the outer shell is configured to fit around the upright column such that the outer shell retains to the column in a self attaching manner without the need for any additional fixings, and

the outer shell surrounds the front member and the first and second outer side members, and the first and second connecting members, such that the outer shell is coupled to the first and second inner side members of the column, thereby protecting the front member, the first and second outer side members, the first and second connecting members and parts of the first and second inner side members, and

wherein in use the inner liner is retained between the outer shell and the column and

in which the inner liner comprises a solid substantially part cylindrical member having a substantially part cylindrical outer surface, and a substantially "U" shaped channel formed on an opposite side of the liner to the substantially part cylindrical outer surface and in which, in use, the channel provides a flush interface between an inner profile of the inner liner and an external profile of the upright column in order for the liner to encapsulate the front face and at least portions of the first and second outer side members.